12.

A

True Account

Of the Burning and ſad Condition of

BANTAM

In the *EAST-INDIES:*

In the WAR begun by the Young King againſt his Father, and of the Great and Imminent Danger of the Engliſh Factory there; in a LETTER from a Member of the ſaid Factory, to a Friend in *London*, by the laſt Ship; which arrived on Saturday the 23th of this inſtant *September* 1682.

SIR,

I Will acquaint you of the unhappy condition *Bantam* is at preſent in, and our State here, occaſioned by a Civil War betwixt the Young and Old King; the former not being inveſted with the full Authority of the Crown, and grudging at thoſe reſerves of Power his Father kept to himſelf, and deſigned to do during life; and being of an Aſpiring, Impatient, and Revengful Nature, of which the *Dutch* (in whoſe Eye *Bantam* hath been for many years an Agreevance) making uſe by ſeveral Inſtruments, *viz.* Great Men under the King (one of which is a Dutchman turned Mahometan, and preferred to great Honours at Court) firſt perſwaded him to build a Fort for his Defence, and always buzzed in his Ears, That his Father was diſguſted with him, and kept part of the Kingdom with no other Deſign, but to ſet up his younger Brother, whom he dearly loved; and every Kindneſs or Favour conferred on the younger Son (who was ever indeed his Fathers Darling) was repreſented like a Robbery of him: being poſſeſt with this belief, he laboured daily to ſtrengthen himſelf, and to cut off and hinder his Father what he could from all ſorts of Ammunition; many times not ſuffering us to deliver what was ſent the Old King by the Company, but ingroſſing it to himſelf, alledging that he being inſtituted in the Throne, and his Father having laid aſide the Cares of Government, it was more conducing to the good of the Kingdom for him to be Poſſeſſor of it, who would ſee it fitly imployed: His Father was patient, not thinking it his Kingdoms Intereſt to quarrel, only ſeemed a little angrily to reſent his uſage, his Fort being done, and he in his own conceit ſufficiently ſtrong with his own Forces, and promiſed Aid from the *Dutch*, ſent to his Father, whoſe Court was about Twenty Miles diſtant from his, to come and live with him, and reſign up his Power, if not ſo ſatisfied, would provide him a Ship to go for *Meuco* to the Tomb of *Mahomet*, to end his days in a Religious Retirement; and if he would condeſcend to neither, he would take away his Life.

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His Father, as he had lived, was resolved to die a King, and upon Receipt of the Message, immediately proclaimed open War, and each strengthened himself to his power: the young King finding all his Brothers and Kindred, and most of his Great Men, fly to his Father, and having nothing but the possession of the Town or City of *Bantam* and his Fort therein left him; immediately sent for the *Dutch*, who with as much speed attended him with about 18 Sail of Ships in the Road, thinking instead of fighting their way, to have Reception on Shore into the Fort (which we are informed they had Orders only to possess themselves of without offering violence to any) and had, had not the Old King with his Army intervened a day or two before, who burnt and plundered all *Bantam*, except our Factory, and a short Street of *Chinamens* Houses, where the *French* and *Danes* live; thereby securing the Shore and all the inhabitants of *Bantam* to himself: and all this was begun, I mean the War proclaimed, and thus far proceeded in the Month of *February*; the Dutch seeing themselves deprived of that easie reception they expected, put another face upon their business, pretending they only came to bring a Letter to the Old King from the General and Council of *Batavia*, who were hitherto in Amity with him, have lain with their Ships in the Road these 14 days without firing a Gun or coming on Shore; all which time the Old Kings Forces have laboured to strengthen the Shore, in order to keep them from landing: and the Contents of their Letter is undoubtedly to pick a quarrel, having so fair an opportunity, which the Old King hath refused sending for, as the Custom is here in State, because attended here with so great an Army; but we hear now intends to fetch it. Then we shall unsterstand their Demands. The Young King, with those four or five Great Men bribed by the Dutch, and about three or four hundred men, remain in the Fort, fires his great Guns daily, and we have received eight or ten Shot into our Factory, but God be thanked they hurt no body. Three or four days together he hoised a Dutch Flag, but now his own again, and that but at times; which is conjectured to be only Signs to the Dutch; several men with Letters having been intercepted between them. 'Tis said the Dutch have more Forces coming, and if they land their men, undoubtedly *Bantam* is theirs. We stand to the fate of War, our Factory being in the midst of danger; which we keep with Guard and a constant Watch: We have each of us our Muskets, with such other Arms as we could get for our defence; and in this posture we stand expecting the sudden (but dreadful) Assaults of the Enemy. Our Factory is concerned in a very great and considerable Adventure on Board a Ship of the Young Kings to the *Manilas*, not yet arrived; if the Old King get her, he will seize all, but with promise of repayment, but there is little hopes of his performance: if the Dutch take her we hope better from them; and we have declared, as likewise the French and Danes, by Letter to their Admiral in the Road, what we are concerned; who have promised to see us have our own respectively.

This Place is ruined as to any Trade for Seven years to come, if the Old King prove Victor, and if the Dutch should be worse than their word, our Lives and Fortunes at their dispose. Our Factory is reported to be a rich place, and therefore if there be any Design against us, it may easily be imagined what we must look for from Souldiers when overcome. I do not then by reason of the sad Experience of their Cruelty, expect to live to give you a further Account from

Bantam, 8 *March* 1681. Sir, Your Assured Friend.

LONDON, Printed for *S. T.*

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